

Environmental Justice, Sustainability on Campus, & Personal Sustainability

April 26, 2022



Credit: CU Solidarity Gardens
<https://www.solidarity-gardens-cu.org/>



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Environmental Injustice Examples:

**Mountain Top Removal,
Elk River Chemical Spill 2014**

Elk River Chemical Spill West Virginia 2014

The New York Times

Thousands Without Water After Spill in West Virginia

NEWS

Six years since the Freedom Industries spill

By Chris Lawrence

January 8, 2020 - 1:54 pm



LOCAL

Exemplary Source Water Protection Program Award given to West Virginia American Water

by: Christian Meffert

Posted: Sep 28, 2021 / 09:54 PM EDT

Updated: Sep 28, 2021 / 09:54 PM EDT



WEST VIRGINIA

“West Virginia American Water’s current source water protection program began out of legislation following the 2014 Freedom Industries chemical spill,” said Erica Pauken, West Virginia American Water source water protection program manager. “Our company viewed that legislation as a baseline, and we created an emergency response and source water protection program that goes far above and beyond the minimum requirements of the law. As a result, it’s an honor to be recognized for those efforts to deliver a superior protection program for our customers in West Virginia.”

EJ Definitions –US EPA

<https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice>



- Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. This goal will be achieved when everyone enjoys:
 - The same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards, and
 - Equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.

EJ further defined by the US EPA

<https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice>



- **Environmental justice (EJ)** is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies.
- **Fair treatment** means no group of people should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, governmental and commercial operations or policies.
- **Meaningful involvement** means:
 - People have an opportunity to participate in decisions about activities that may affect their environment and/or health;
 - The public's contribution can influence the regulatory agency's decision;
 - Community concerns will be considered in the decision making process; and
 - Decision makers will seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected.

Local EJ Issue: Asphalt Plant in Urbana Neighborhood

- **EPA sent a note to city official in Urbana when the asphalt plant in East Urbana applied for a permit.**
- **East Urbana is in a designated Environmental Justice Zone**
- **Urbana held a meeting with the EPA & Asphalt Plant.**

Local EJ Issue: Coal Ash polluting Vermillion River

<https://ecojusticecollaborative.org/why-the-middle-fork/>

Dynegy to remove 3.3 Million Cubic Yards of coal ash along the Vermillion River. Took years of community organizing, tons of meetings. Tenacity. Buckets of public input. 300 people at a public hearing. Petitions. Pressure on the state legislature to protect the river. And more.



Just six feet of unmitigated erosion could destabilize the Old East Ash Pit.. EJC. 2018.

Happy Earth Month!



iCAP 2020 and Campus Sustainability



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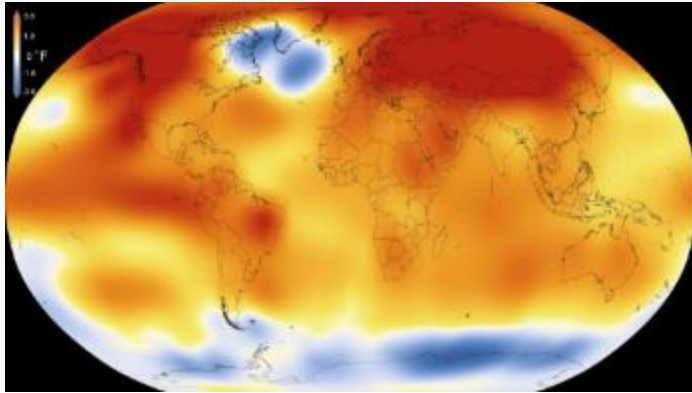


Facilities & Services
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The Institute for Sustainability, Energy, and Environment (iSEE):

actionable research, campus sustainability, education & outreach

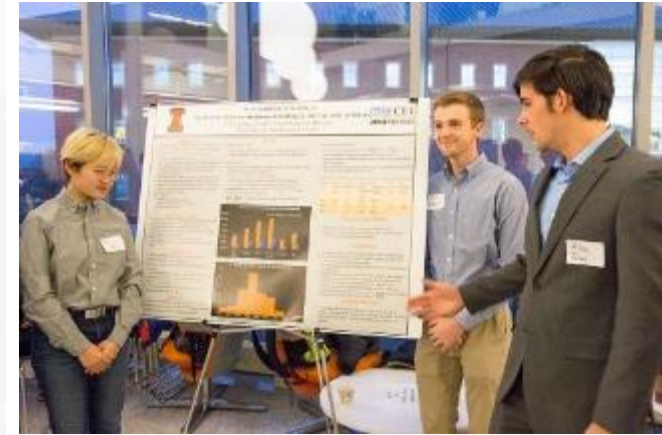
sustainability.illinois.edu



Actionable research



Campus sustainability



Education & outreach

The overarching goal: *To become a global model of sustainability by creating effective, positive change. Also, to become the “front porch” for all sorts of sustainability resources for campus and community members.*





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Facilities & Services (F&S) provides all physical plant, operational, and essential services for sustaining an environment that fosters the research, teaching, and public engagement activities at Illinois.

- Transportation Demand Management
- Resilient Grounds and Landscapes
- Zero Waste and Recycling
- Renewable Energy
- Energy and Water Conservation
- LEED Certifications
- Green Stormwater Infrastructure
- Sustainability Education and Behavior Change



Facilities & Services

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Inspiration • Innovation • Leadership • Perseverance • Agility

Resilience

- 8.1 Urban Biodiversity Master Plan – Extension w/F&S
- 8.2 Coordinated Rainwater Management – F&S w/Extension
- 8.3 Environmental Justice Plan - iSEE**
- 8.4 Local Sustainability Issues - iSEE
- 8.5 Inventory Green Jobs - iSEE
- 8.6 Vision Zero – F&S
- 8.7 Local Offsets Program - iSEE

What is campus doing?



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Climate Leadership Commitments



- Signed by 500+ leading American higher education presidents and chancellors
- 2008: signed the Carbon Commitment, pledging to be carbon neutral as soon as possible and no later than 2050
- 2016: signed the Resilience Commitment, pledging to build resilience to climate change with our local community

ILLINOIS CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

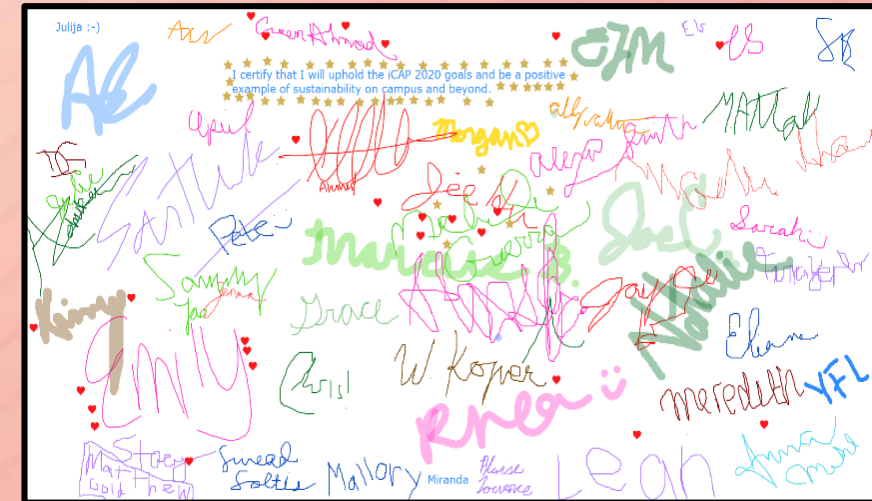
2020

Message from the Chancellor

"Our hope is that this spirit of environmental stewardship permeates campus on administrative and individual scales...I am confident that all of us at the university will join together with the shared commitment it will take to make the ambitious goals of this plan a real and sustainable future here at Illinois."

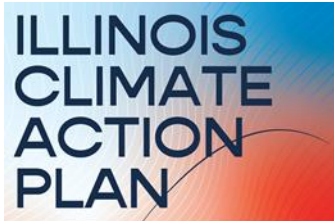
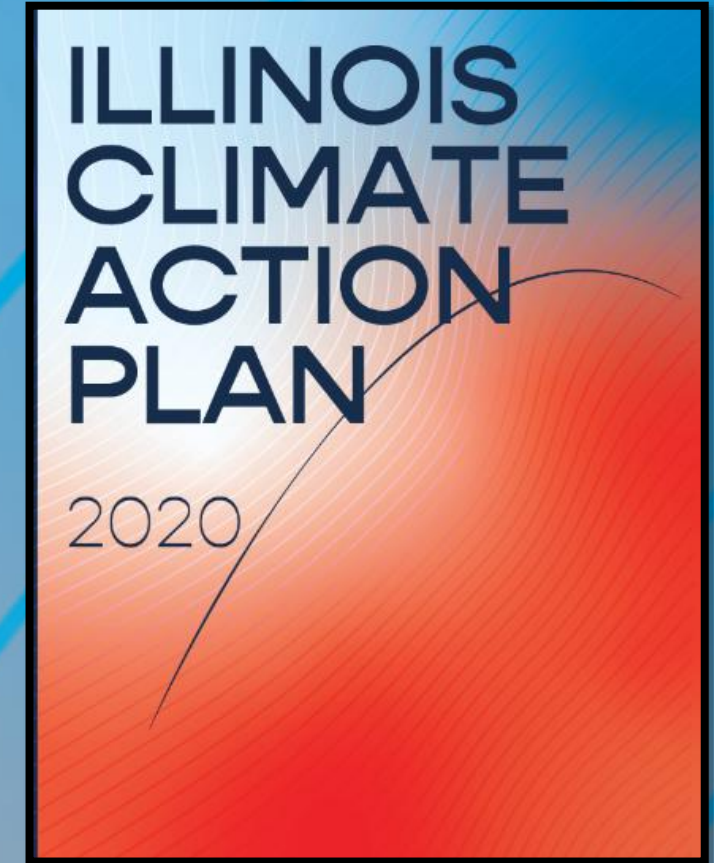


Robert J. Jones
Chancellor, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign



Illinois Climate Action Plan (iCAP) 2020

- The iCAP is our strategic plan for meeting the Climate Leadership Commitments
- SMART objectives for each theme, tracked on iCAP Portal (<http://icap.sustainability.illinois.edu>)

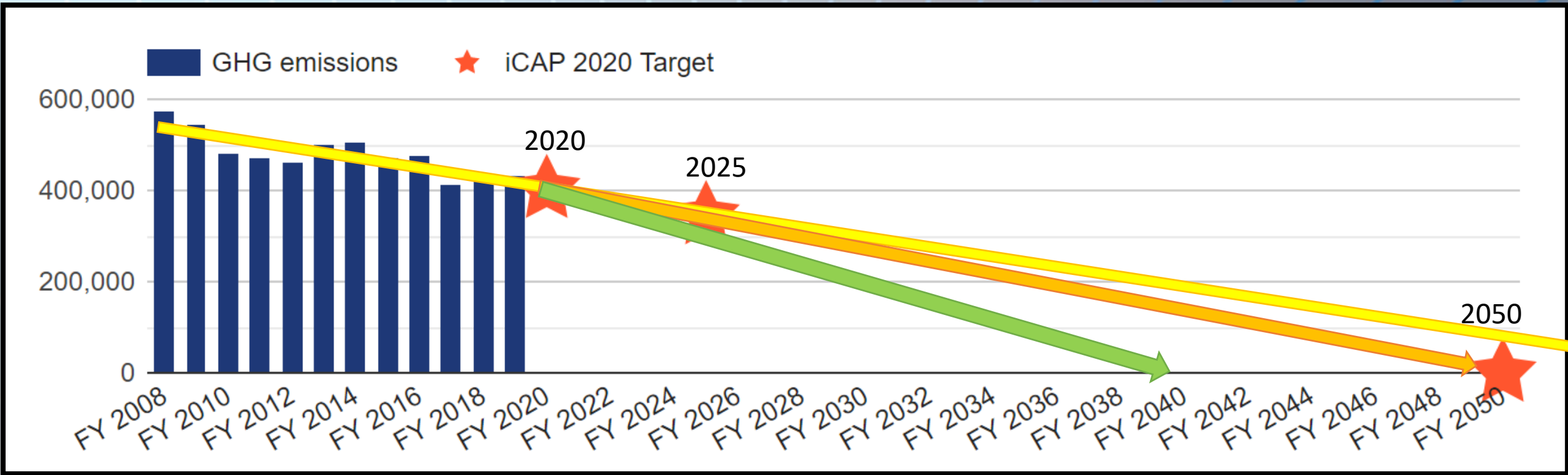


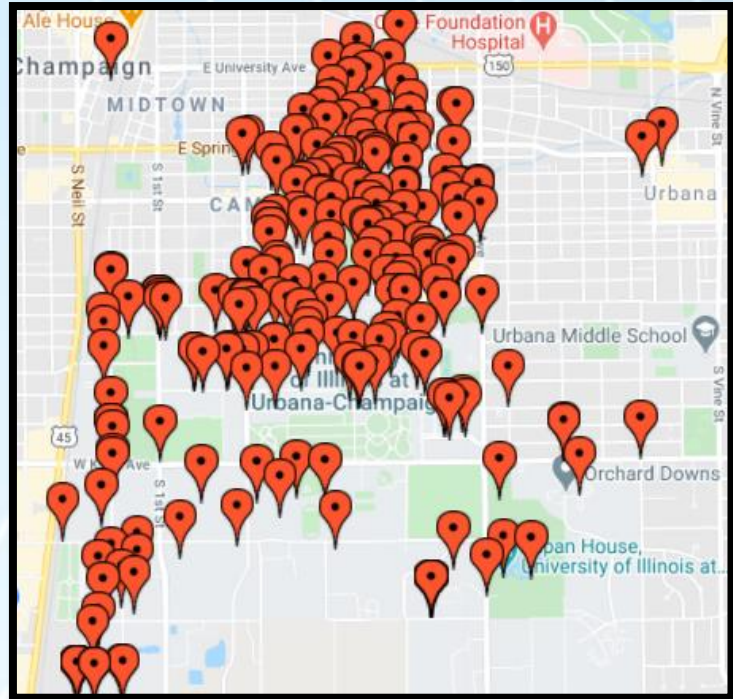
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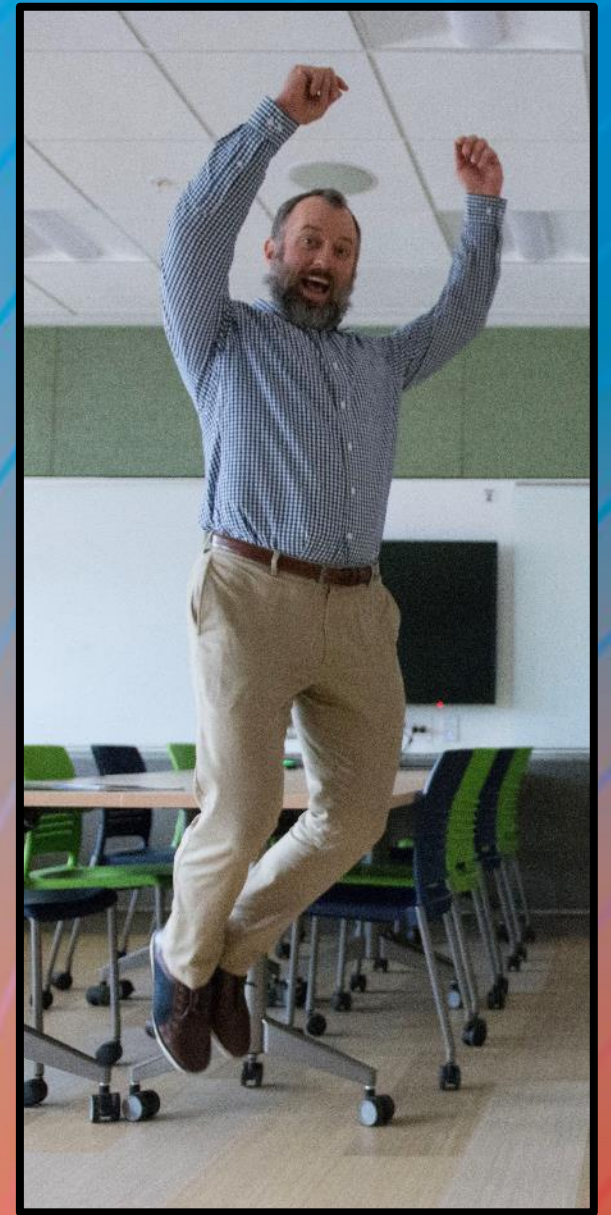
Total Campus Greenhouse Gas Emissions





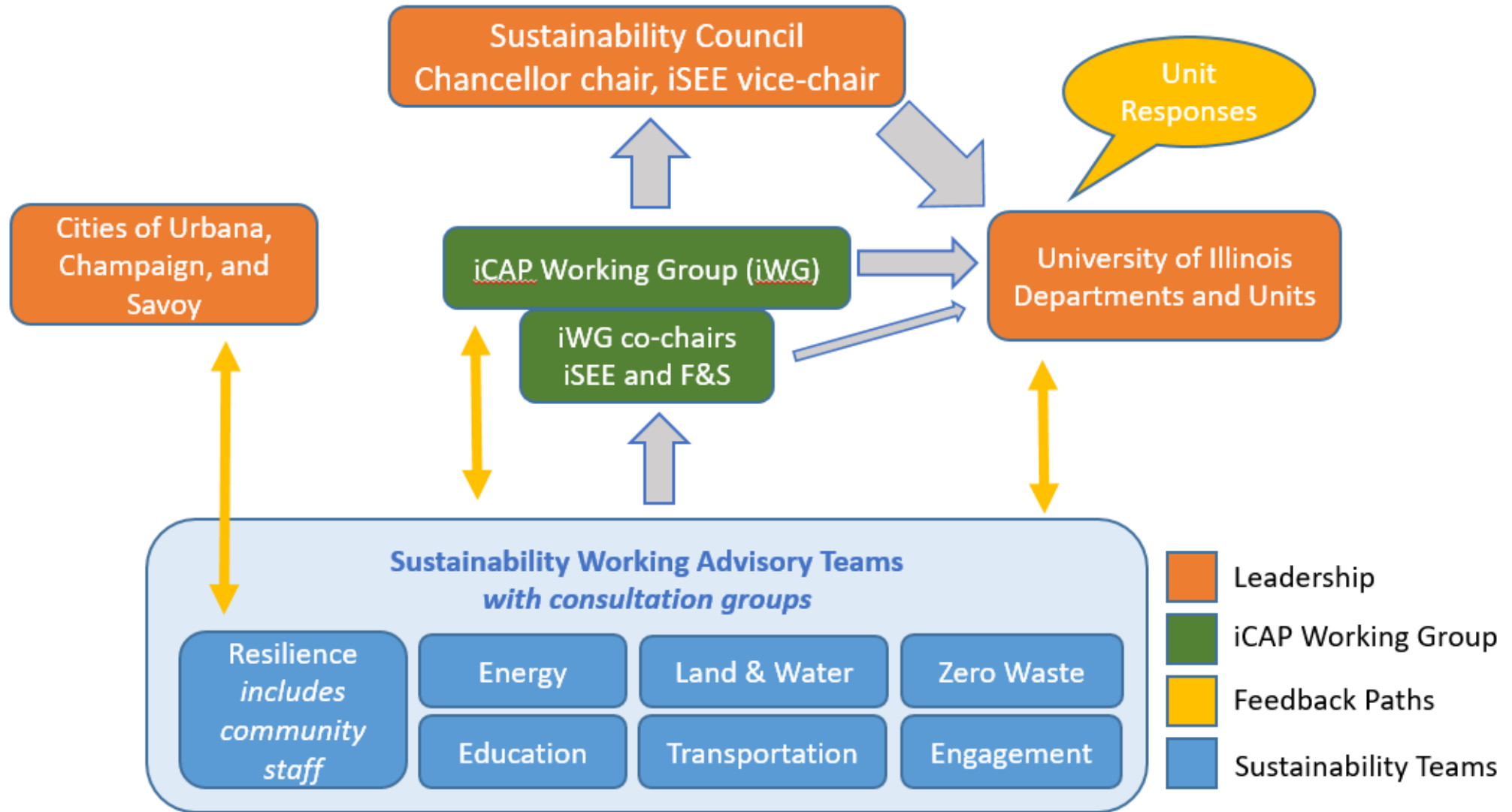
The iCAP Portal

icap.sustainability.illinois.edu



“Wow! The iCAP Portal is so cool! It’s so useful and informative!” – Anonymous

iCAP Process and Teams



Sustainability Working Advisory Teams

Topics

- Energy
- Land and Water
- Transportation
- Zero Waste
- Education
- Resilience
- Engagement (new!)

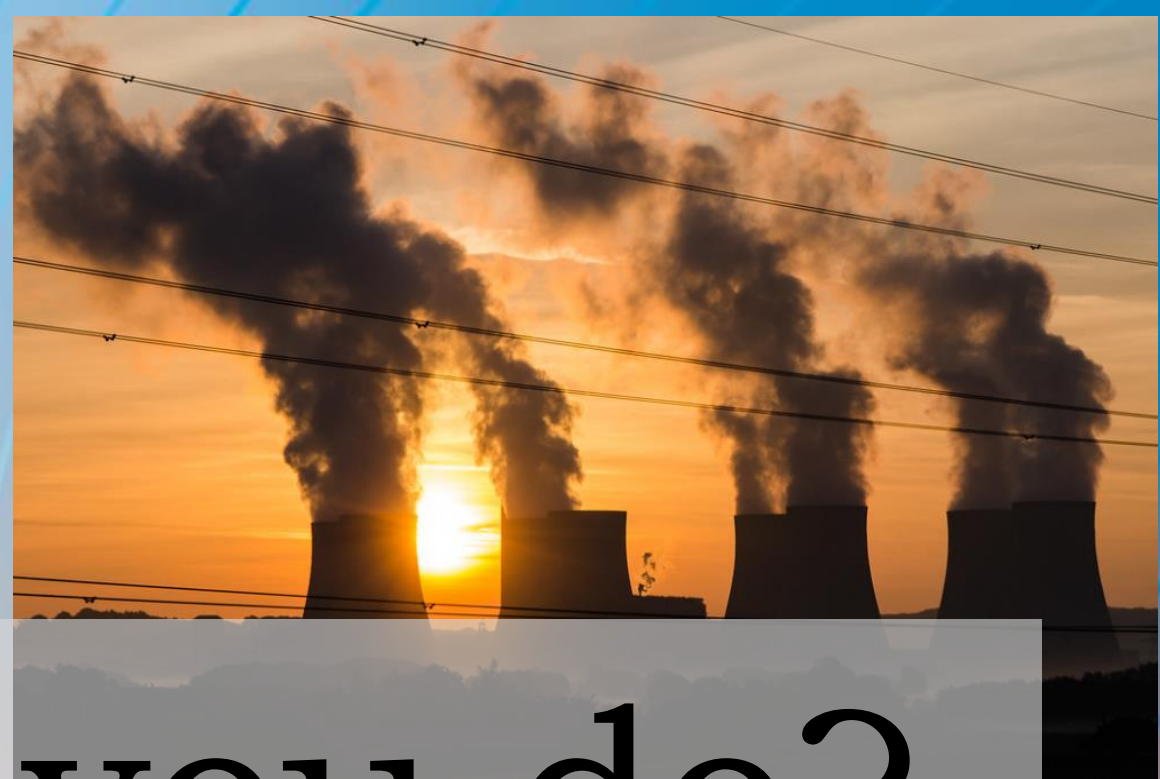
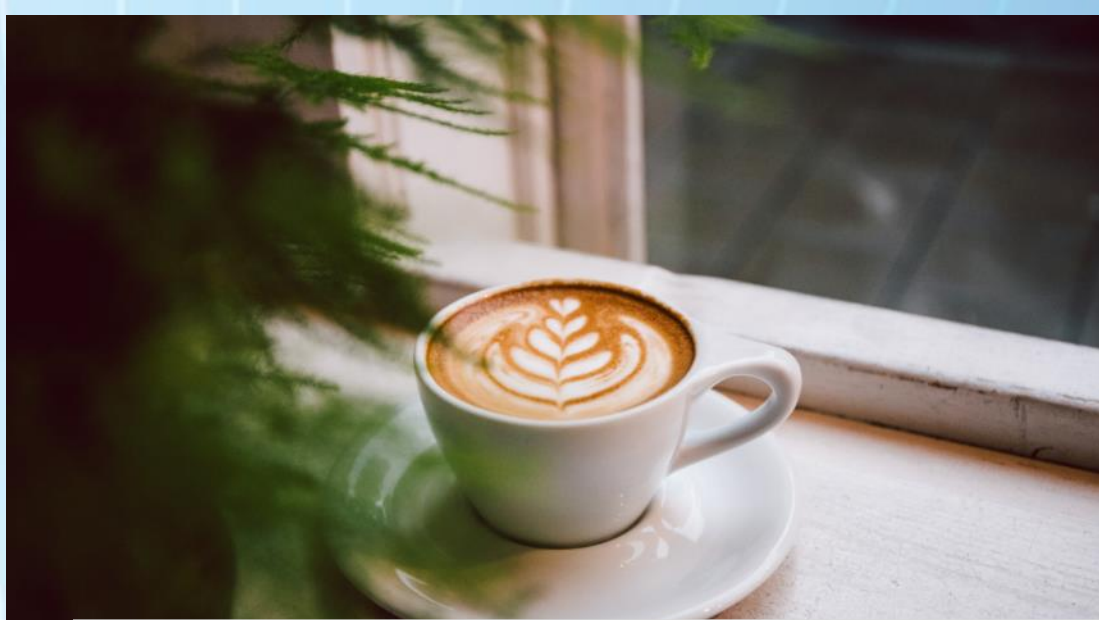
Members

- Students
- Faculty
- Staff

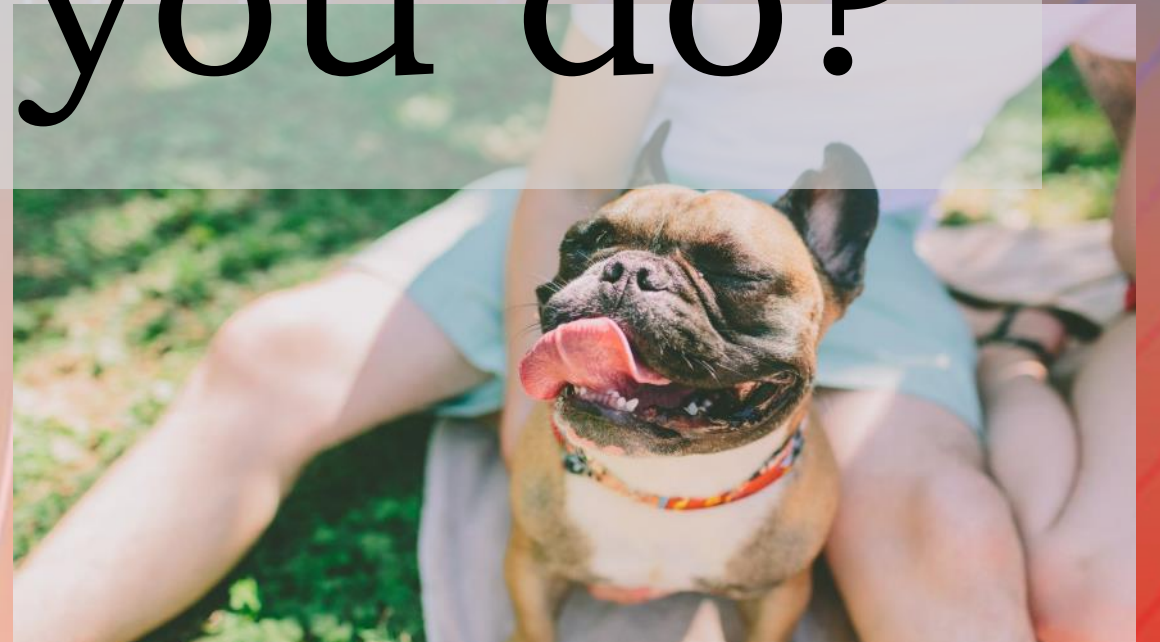
Ex-officio

- Student Clerks
- Consultants





What can you do?



What can you do to make our campus more sustainable?

Get Involved – and Tell a Friend!

- [Green Office/Green Chapter Certification](#)
- [Sign up for the iSEE newsletter](#)
- [Read the iCAP 2020](#)
- [Join an SSC Working Group](#)
- [Join a sustainability RSO](#)
- [Do sustainability research](#)
- [Check out the iCAP Portal](#)
- [Use the Bin Pledge](#)
- [Watch our Sustainability Training Videos](#)



Certified Greener Campus Programs



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EICzUtFY5bM>

iSEE

ILLINI LIGHTS OUT

Help campus reduce its environmental footprint just by turning out the lights!

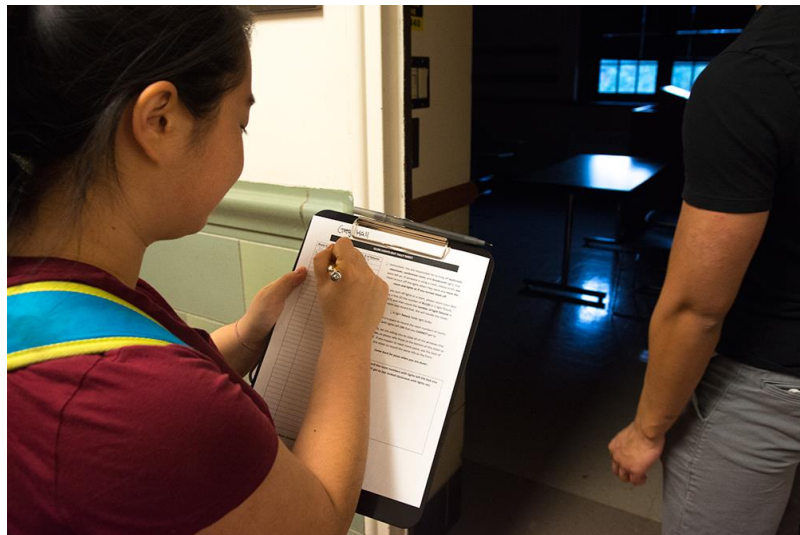
Fall 2021 Event Dates

Fridays from 5:30 to 7 p.m.!

Sept. 17 • Oct. 22 • Nov. 12 • Dec. 3



**Click here to
sign up!**



153,091

Lights turned off through Spring 2020

190.8

Tons of carbon dioxide equivalent saved
through Spring 2020

27,258

Dollars saved in energy bills through Spring
2020



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iSEE

#UseTheBin

<https://go.fs.illinois.edu/binpledges>



SCAN HERE

ILLINOIS
CLIMATE
ACTION
PLAN



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What can you do?

- Get involved
- Show up, lead by example
- Talk about it
- Reach out if you have an idea, notice a problem, or if something stands out to you

We are in this together!

Local Volunteer Opportunities

- Eco Justice Collaborative
- CU Solidarity Gardens
- Prairie Rivers Network
- Prairie Chapter of the Sierra Club
- Faith in Place
- Champaign County Health Care Consumers
- Champaign County Climate Coalition lead by Urbana Parks
- Champaign County Forest Preserve District
- Citizens Utility Board
- Learn about the Climate & Equitable Jobs Act in Illinois
- Sustainability Advisory Commission Urbana



Thank you!
Questions?